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Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health (NIOSH)
National Personal Protective
Technology Laboratory (NPPTL)
626 Cochran's Mill Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15236
November 14, 2002

RESPIRATOR USERS NOTICE

SUBJECT: Potential for the quick start candle on MSA Life-Saver 60 Self-Contained Self-Rescuer (SCSR) to overheat or catch fire on units manufactured from October 2000 to July 2002

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH or the Institute) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) wish to inform users of the MSA Life-Saver 60 Self-Contained Self-Rescuer (SCSR) that the potential for the quick start candle to become excessively hot may exist on MSA Life Saver 60 SCSRs manufactured from October 2000 to July 2002. In extreme cases, this excessive heat may cause components near the quick start candle to ignite. The MSA Life-Saver 60 SCSRs may be further identified by the NIOSH/MSHA approval number TC-13F-385.

MSA received reports of excessive heat, sparks, and fire on oxygen-generating breathing apparatus (OBA) canisters used by navies. MSA identified that the OBA quick start candle is also used on the Life-Saver 60 SCSR and reported this information to NIOSH and MSHA. However, there have been no reports of overheating with the Life-Saver 60 SCSRs to date. An MSA investigation revealed that the root cause of the overheated quick start candles is due to a higher than normal amount of iron powder present in the quick start candle that can cause the candle to become excessively hot. MSA has made changes to the candle production and now has additional test requirements to ensure that the quick start candles contain the right amount of iron powder.

Due to the potential risks to the user, both NIOSH and MSHA recommend that mine operators and other employers follow the recommendations listed in MSA's User Notice (attached) to conduct an inventory of MSA Life-Saver 60 SCSRs in their possession and identify all those units in service that were manufactured between September 2000 and July 2002. In accordance with that Notice, action should be taken promptly. The following guidance for identifying affected units was obtained from the MSA user notice:

Life-Saver 60 SCSRs manufactured between September 2000 and July 2002 are easily identified with a serial number. The serial numbers of the units in question range from 14573 through 15661. Units within this range were shipped to customers between September 2000 through July 2002. The serial number is stamped on the metal band of each unit.

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Additional information may be obtained from MSHA, Jeff Kravitz at 412-386-6923, or Monty Christo at 202-693-9527, or NIOSH, Siva Hota at 412-386-6731.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roland J. BerryAnn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a stylized "A" at the end.

Roland J. BerryAnn
Acting Branch Chief
Respirator Branch
National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory

Enclosure